

February 9, 2009

Dear Environmental Co-Chairs Meyer and Ray:

The following is to be presented as testimony for Bill 6313 which concerns raw milk and raw milk products.

The Blessed event has finally arrived. The cries of a newborn are heard and immediately the nurse places a hang tag around the wrist of the little one... blue for boys and pink for girls. Well, I say that's traditional. Is it the baby's name? No, it looks as if it has more than the baby's surname. There's a message on the tag in contrasting letters. The nurse who lovingly placed it there looks at the baby, smiles and reads the hang tag in a gentle, but serious voice. **WARNING:** Little One, you have just entered into this world. Beware of all things you see, hear, touch, eat or drink. Since there may be harmful bacteria in your food, scientists have pasteurized it, sometimes altered it by adding to it, and sometimes greedy manufacturers, with cost cutting incentives have added nonfood life threatening items such as melamine to your formula. As you struggle to grow and live, your generation will have lowered resistance to disease and higher risk of serious illness.

Picture in your mind a beautiful sloping driveway which winds downward through a covered bridge, gently slopes upward to a curve that breathtakingly allows the traveler to view vast meadows with split rail fences and antique stone walls. Jersey cows are contentedly grazing in a spotlight of sun in the far meadow. They glance toward me as I continue to drive. Yes, it is my beautiful home at the Baldwin Brook Farm in the quiet northeast corner of Ct in the town of Canterbury.

Here at the farm we meticulously care for our cows. Everyone who comes to our farm is amazed at its beauty and the way we put so much effort into producing the delicious raw milk that we sell in glass bottles. Our farm customers as well as our retail store customers eagerly look forward to its purchase. They are aware that it is raw milk and commend us for the carefulness we provide to make this product safe and wholesome for them and their families.

Does the Dept. of Agriculture have the right to take each one's freedom of choice away by not allowing retail raw milk sales? Bill 6313 (h) states that retail raw milk shall only be sold where the milk is produced. I believe that each person should have the freedom of choice to buy milk at the farm or in any retail store.

If the Dept of Ag. feels it is mandated to protect the populace by requiring additional testing of cows, milk, and products made from milk (Bill 6313 Section 2), then it should fund each and every test themselves that it thinks is necessary and not require individual farmers who already have severe tax burdens and fees placed on them to pay for these additional excessive and unfair fees. If the Department states there is no line item in the department's resources to do this, does the individual farmer have more? I recommend that the Dept. of Ag. needs to focus vigorously in seeking its share of Federal Gov. stimulus moneys to help the farmers stay economically in business. Bankrupt farmers do not need to be added to the growing unemployment list. We need you, the Dept of Ag. to be partners with us and see our plight. It surely wouldn't take 20 billion dollars for additional cow testing, or do we let the Wall Street Greed Seekers continue to use our tax money and that of future generations to continue in their wastefulness and addictiveness?

But, in the meantime, Little One, your parents, and all consumers: **Beware of all things you see, hear, touch, eat or drink since they may be harmful to your physical, emotional and spiritual health.** Yes, the WARNING has included additional areas. Think about it. . . This WARNING LABEL in big bold letters should be placed at the entrance of every public store and establishment. There needs to be no warning on individual items any more, since everything, for example: baby car seats, toys, mercury laden tuna, peanut butter, video games, etc. need to be tested, scrutinized, and watched !

AND, REMEMBER: Raw milk is a perfect food. It has all the nutrients beneficial for good health. Everyone has the right to choose it wherever it is sold, if they wish.

Sincerely,

Phyllis A. Johnson
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